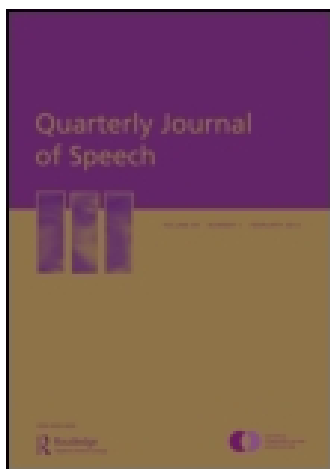




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An Epideictic Dimension of Symbolic Violence in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*: Inter-Generational Lessons in Romanticizing and Tolerating Intimate Partner Violence

Kathryn M. Olson

This criticism analyzes one epideictic dimension of Disney's Beauty and the Beast to demonstrate how the film's combination of sophisticated rhetorical strategies might cultivate a romanticized understanding of and tolerance toward intimate partner violence among inter-generational audiences. The film departs from earlier legend versions by focusing exclusively on the romantic arc and introducing various kinds of violence and new characters to exercise, interpret, and accommodate that violence. Pivotal to this particular epideictic dimension's operation are Beast's violent acts toward Belle relative to Gaston's violence toward her, adult characters minimizing, justifying, or romanticizing in the presence of a child character the repeated signs of intimate partner violence, and those adults' efforts to facilitate a romance in spite of Beast's violence and Belle's reluctance. Disney featuring child character Chip, with his questions about romance and front-row seat to the title characters' relationship (including violent episodes that resonate with the phases of Walker's Cycle Theory of Violence), underscores a coherent ideology explaining, on the approving community's behalf, the troubling intersection of violence and romance and (unintentionally, yet powerfully) endorsing that ideology's socially conservative, individualistic prescriptions for handling it.

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Tale as old as time
True as it can be
Barely even friends
Then somebody bends unexpectedly.

Just a little change
Small to say the least
Both a little scared
Neither one prepared, beauty and the beast.¹

So warbled Angela Lansbury as the voice of the enchanted teapot/cook Mrs. Potts in Disney's 1991 animated film *Beauty and the Beast*.² According to these lyrics, neither boy nor girl is "prepared" for the role of intimate in a romantic relationship. This essay begs to differ, arguing that community-approved texts such as Disney's wildly popular (e.g., re-released in Blu-ray in 2010 and 3-D in 2011) film might be an important part of viewers' "preparation" for the roles they will play when it comes to participating in or observing others' intimate relationships, epideictically providing models of and explanations for acceptable behavior. Critically reading the film's use of violence as a rhetorical strategy to give pleasure, advance the plot, and coach viewers' sympathies demonstrates how it is possible and why it is socially important to consider the film's symbolic patterns through the lens of intimate partner violence. The violent episodes shown and contextualized by supporting characters' discussions may offer or reinforce epideictic lessons for inter-generational audiences that encourage an admirable, but compliant "victim" to believe she can reform a violent mate through nurturing care as well as for excusing rough behavior as intense romantic passion. An essential part of what makes Beast sympathetic is his mortal combat with and textual invitations to compare him to Belle's more violent suitor Gaston.

Most disturbing are the ways adult characters repeatedly minimize or justify, in the presence of a child, recurring threats and violence in this couple's relationship, in spite of textual evidence that they know from past experience Beast's actual capacity for violence. I use the term "violence" to denote using words or actions to negate another's value or being. It includes blows, verbal put-downs, and insults about the self. "Symbolic violence" includes representations of violence as well as threats short of blows, physical destruction of objects proximate to or cherished by the other, and containing the other through intimidation or implication that force will be used unless there is compliance. Under this view, rhetoric can constitute violence, but it is neither inherently violent nor the violation of another, as some have argued.³ Wayne Brockriede, Henry H. Johnstone, Jr., and Maurice Natanson develop process-based rhetorical ethics showing how people may argue or persuade without violating the other's value, being, or ability to respond rhetorically.⁴ Wayne C. Booth demonstrates

how a similar ethical approach to persuasion can enhance effectiveness, rejecting the notion that ethical rhetoric is, by its nature, ineffective.⁵ Surveys show that almost half of US adults have experienced psychological aggression from a romantic partner and a third physical violence.⁶ Yet seven in ten adults—the same number who claim they would intervene if they recognized partner violence in progress—say it is difficult to tell whether a witnessed instance (including slapping, hitting, threats, verbal abuse) constitutes or warns of romantic violence.⁷ Repeated instances, even when varied, can constitute a pattern—one that presents a stronger argument for the presence of intimate partner violence. This essay, in offering one explanation for the contradictory statistics on the prevalence versus recognition of intimate partner violence, will argue that what appears to be an innocuous story of crassness transformed by love can be read otherwise.

The first section shows how Disney narrowed and marketed its version as an animated representation of the romance genre, adding generous doses of violent action to make the story sensible and appealing across generations in light of the traditional legend elements it jettisoned. It examines the prevailing themes in both positive and negative responses to Disney's film. The second section argues that Disney's film, as positioned by the studio and the positive responses it garnered, invites analysis as an instance of epideictic successfully addressing inter-generational audiences. It examines specifically the role of the invented violence in pleasing and teaching inter-generational audiences and introduces the critical concept of an epideictic dimension, which may exist in texts that are not generically epideictic. An epideictic dimension contains patterns of rhetorical choices that reinforce conservative social positions on issues other than the values to which the text is ostensibly dedicated or that cultivate its featured conservative lessons in unexpected ways. Using child character Chip as a framing device and interpretive categories from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Walker's Cycle Theory of Violence,⁸ the third section contends that Disney's rhetorical choices create an epideictic dimension that normalizes and romanticizes intimate partner violence for both potential participants and bystanders. The conclusion examines the moral and rhetorical implications of this normalizing move.

Disney's Textual and Marketing Choices: Magnifying the Romance and Adding Violence

Subtracting Elements that Facilitate More Varied Epideictic Lessons in Earlier Legend Versions

While no legend is fixed, and this one has been elastic enough to reflect variations of culture and creativity, this story for centuries was knit together by a central core of motifs, images, characters, and conflicts that endured because those elements are magnetic to each other structurally and to people, variably but almost universally.⁹ According to Beauty and the Beast legend expert Betsy Hearne, "The story's effectiveness as a literary/artistic whole steadies it through myriad historical

changes. In a sense, the most powerful elements of the story shake off all reformers to assume a singular, distinctive shape over and over again despite vagaries of aesthetic invention and moral intention.”¹⁰ Although Gabrielle de Villeneuve’s 362-page French salon version preceded it, most historians defer to Madame Le Prince de Beaumont’s 1757 version, written as a tale for the moral improvement of girls to reinforce the intellectual and educational goals of a meritocracy, as authoritative.¹¹

But Disney changed “the essential characters of Belle, her father, and the Beast” and radically altered the legend’s “basic plot.”¹² Disney truncated Belle’s role and character. In Beaumont’s version, “the Beast’s metamorphosis is only one aspect of a multifaceted story, and Beauty’s character development is at issue as much as the Beast’s.”¹³ Hearne distinguishes a narrative structure focused on “journeys of action and maturation” as one of the three central elements of the enduring tale.¹⁴ But Disney quickly short-circuited Beauty’s “quest” subplot and gradual moral development, recasting her as a spirited, yet primarily nurturing homebody.

Belle’s quest for adventure and education will be swallowed by the romance plot. . . . To her credit, Belle is adventurous and brave, as her determination to find her father and her proposal that she take his place as a prisoner both demonstrate. . . . In spite of Belle’s aspirations to educate herself, the film locates her real value in her capacity to nurture.¹⁵

Disney replaced Belle’s usual moral development with “consumer feminism.”¹⁶

Disney’s Belle is therefore barely recognizable as a relative of the traditional fairy tale Beauty, but instantly recognizable as a feisty Disney heroine . . . constructed to be acceptable and entertaining to both children and adults.¹⁷

Furthermore, Disney reduced the story to Beauty–Beast’s relationship, refashioned it to fit modern romantic conventions, and drove the plot through violent action, manipulative scheming, and jealous conflict rather than nightly dinner conversations; in order to quicken the pace and add action appealing to young viewers, it invented an enchanted household staff to interact with the couple and facilitate the romance.¹⁸ According to *TV Guide*, Walt Disney Studios chair Jeffrey Katzenberg found

the “problem” with the original storyline, the French court tale popularized by Madame Le Prince de Beaumont in 1757, was that “it’s basically about two people who eat dinner together every night.” Fine for Jean Cocteau’s dark, poetic 1945 movie version, but hardly kiddie matinee fare. Hence the talking teapot, rousing song-and-dance and “Home Alone”-style slapstick.¹⁹

Disney focused “narrative attention on courtship as plot advancement and marriage as denouement,” thus “de-emphasiz[ing] most of the earlier version’s concern with virtue, further intensifying the focus on the ‘romantic angle.’”²⁰ Given its fundamental rhetorical changes, Belle might be seen as no longer an agent instigating her father’s predicament or the heroine who saves him but as an “object of desire, not the active subject” and “an observer of two guys fighting over a girl.”²¹ In the truncated story, violence substitutes for missing legend elements.

Although it is clear that “Beauty and the Beast” has always been in part a love story, earlier printed versions of the tale offer valuable lessons in addition to emphasizing the love relationship. Disney, on the other hand, strips the traditional fairy tale of anything but the romantic trajectory, throws in a dose of violence, and woos its audience into believing it has been educated as well as entertained.²²

Disney eliminated or minimized complex character roles and non-violent plot devices that facilitate the romance in, as well as various epideictic lessons about moral development and meritocracy from, earlier legend versions. Gone are Belle’s two treacherous sisters, who rhetorically served some of the tale’s didactic messages on virtue, and her dreams’ female confidante with Belle’s best interests at heart.²³ Disney revised the father from a successful merchant into a hapless, infantilized inventor, relieving him of all responsibility and prompting the Belle–Beast confrontation at the castle rather than having the father, as agent, deliver a daughter.²⁴ The studio changed legend “details” like the Beast demanding that the father pay with his life or deliver a daughter only *after* the father steals a rose bush bough to fulfill Belle’s gift request and *after* the Beast has graciously accommodated him overnight during a bad storm.²⁵ Disney demoted Belle from a princess (de Villeneuve’s version) or a merchant’s daughter learning that education and perseverance are necessary to succeed in a meritocracy (Beaumont’s version) to the “working-class daughter of a village hobby-inventor” whose transformation is accomplished simply by marrying into the aristocracy.²⁶ Having discarded the legend’s mutually magnetic plot features, Disney also changed the rose into a literal “ticking clock” or “hourglass” to nominally keep that element and rush the romance, but also to answer the plot question that is a pretext for adding violence: “Why would it tick off Beast so much?”²⁷ Beast’s personal moral development from earlier legend versions is also compromised:

Beast, of course, learns nothing at all, really, except how to get girls. . . . In this outrageous turn around, it is Beast who is advertised to be the possessor of “beauty” and Belle must learn its nature. . . . It is Belle—robbed of her traditional [inquisitive, intellectual] Beauty—who is being instructed in how to elicit beauty [which ultimately turns to or is indicated by physical beauty] from beastliness. . . . For Disney to extract this moral requires outrageous disregard of the worst aspects of Beast—his cruelty, rages and hostage-taking.²⁸

As argued next, Disney did not just “disregard” Beast’s violent behavior; the studio invented it, anticipating that it would increase inter-generational appeal, yet in the process dramatizing what constitutes “acceptable” violence in romantic relationships, a pattern showing repeated violations uncomfortably similar to a cycle of violence that many real-life victims endure unaided.

Inventing Violence as a Substitute Plot-Driver and to Engage Inter-Generational Audiences

One might contend that fairy tales are meant to be morality tales, which often include violence as a narrative means. However, the long tradition of the Beauty and the Beast legend, which Disney used to help authorize its film and promote it as an

inter-generational must-see, is an exception. Historical research indicates that Beast's violence (particularly intimate partner violence) is not an inherent part of the legend, but a Disney innovation. This film's other violent and victims (e.g., Gaston, the townspeople, the castle staff) also do not appear in earlier versions—let alone drive the plot, code for audiences good and evil characters and acceptable versus unacceptable violence, and coach with whom to sympathize as they do in Disney's version. Unprecedented violent acts and scenes appeared in the film (e.g., Belle and Beast's encounter in his lair, the wolf attack) to substitute for what had been removed in order to make familiar sense of the revised, romance-focused plot and to engage inter-generational viewers. These choices are certainly Disney's right to make, as story-teller, but responsibility for their potential consequences cannot be ignored or attributed to the legend's authorizing tradition.

First, Disney invented the castle staff, their antics, and Beast's violence toward them. The staff is a pivotal narrative and pedagogical device that, given the legend elements that were discarded to broaden the film's inter-generational appeal, enables and interprets the now-central romantic angle even as it entertains young viewers. Disney gave a prominent narrative role to the enchanted housewares who indicate to viewers the reality of Beast's violence, yet coax along the romance.

Second, Disney added Beast's violence toward and in defense of Belle. "In earlier versions Beast, while monstrous, never threatens Beauty enough to make her want to leave."²⁹

Disney's Beast has an angry, violent streak that is not present in Beaumont's version. Her Beast is cordial, gentle, and refined; as Beauty puts it, he has "virtue, sweetness of temper, and complaisance" (202). Disney's Beast, on the other hand, is characterized by a terrible temper, manifested through physical power, which causes him to tear apart his private chambers and frightens the castle's inhabitants. . . . That the Disney writers portray the Beast as an ignorant monster instead of as an intelligent being also substantially changes the meaning of Beauty's acceptance of him.³⁰

Susan Jeffords notes that Disney's is the only version to enlighten the audience in the prologue to the existence and nature of Beast's curse and its antidote (traditionally not revealed until the conclusion), to give the antidote an expiration date to rush the plot (Beast's 21st birthday or the curse is permanent), and to ensure audience sympathies for Beast, even if he is somewhat responsible for his plight, by adding the potential collateral damage that the innocent servants will be forever bewitched, too.³¹ The pivotal wolf attack that brings Belle back to the castle is also Disney's invention. Belle flees Beast only to be attacked by wolves; Beast, who is following, rescues Belle. This act defines him as a hero and facilitates the "romantic set piece" where she returns and nurses his wounds.³² Violence uniquely defines Disney's Beast, sympathetically and relative to other key characters, and advances the romance in ways not needed when magnetic legend elements were intact.

Third, by adding the handsome, yet obnoxious alternative suitor Gaston, Disney introduced much cinematic violence and re-made the traditionally tender storyline into a romantic competition. Gaston is a major character for whom there is no

precedent in earlier versions except for Avenant in Cocteau's film; over the years, the Beauty and the Beast tale sometimes included alternative suitors for Belle, but only as minor characters.³³ Gaston adds exciting violence and brutality to engage young viewers and sets up an unprecedented love triangle, in spite of Belle's disinterest in him.³⁴ Disney's "violation of profound elements" and its addition of "frenetic" speed and competition "have turned the folklore journey into a chase."³⁵

Marketing Disney's Version as an Animated Romantic Classic for All Ages

Such rhetorical disconnections from earlier versions, both subtractions and additions, were intentional.³⁶ The *New York Times's* Janet Maslin wrote, "If this *Beauty and the Beast* is a long way from Jean Cocteau's 1947 [sic] black-and-white version, it's also a long way from the original fairy tale, which has been largely jettisoned in favor of a more timely story."³⁷ The studio took pains to make the animated violence and title characters' reactions to it (particularly for the climactic confrontation when Beast finds Belle in his lair) as human and emotionally powerful as possible.³⁸ Disney's realistic depictions of violence, rage, fear, and remorse are partly achieved by recording the characters' voices first, then having the animators draw, incorporating the real-life actors' mannerisms and emotions into the animated characters.³⁹ To perfect characters' movements, live-action actors were video recorded doing scenes against blank backgrounds until the director was satisfied; these were printed out frame-by-frame to provide inspiration for animators to humanize movements and make them unobtrusively life-like and "convincing" to viewers.⁴⁰ Howard Ashman, "the simplicity police," insured that anything non-essential to Disney's version was omitted and assured that "every single scene" was amped until it had a palpable umbrella of emotion.⁴¹ Even the songs provide exposition integral to the revised plot, rather than being unrelated interludes from the action.⁴² Such choices humanized the title characters' movements and emotions in a way written stories cannot, facilitating easy identification and transferability of subtle epideictic lessons to viewers, young and old.

From the beginning, Disney designed and marketed its animated film as a classic romance for all ages. At its release, *TV Guide's* Rick Marin called the film "surprisingly sexy" and noted "Disney's double-edged marketing campaign. One of the movie posters is kid-cartoonish, the other moodily grown-up with a line that reads 'The most beautiful love story ever told.' . . . So far, the adult pitch seems to be working."⁴³ Disney's marketing attempts and rhetorical choices worked to make the film appealing to adults who consider themselves liberated in terms of sexual politics and hope to teach children the same. Disney "frequently point[ed] to the feminist sensibilities of Linda Woolverton, the woman writer behind the screenplay. In addition, they've aggressively marketed their new heroine as a strong, active heroine who hungers for adventure."⁴⁴ *Sight and Sound* reports,

This is a fairy tale that's vividly aware of contemporary sexual politics; it has consciously picked out a strand in the tale's history and developed it for an audience of mothers who grew up with Betty Friedan and Gloria

Steinem, who have daughters who listen to Madonna and Sinead O'Connor. Woolverton's screenplay gives us a heroine of spirit who finds romance on her own terms.⁴⁵

Significantly, when considering the epideictic dimension, Disney's version will become "canonical" and marginalize earlier non-violent legend versions.⁴⁶ Evidence suggests it already has for many American adults, who choose this film as family, not just individual, entertainment, and explicitly celebrate it as an exemplary love story, not just a child's cartoon. For example, the American Film Institute's 2002 list of the 100 greatest love stories in 100 years of film history recognizes Disney's version as number 34, and *Premiere* magazine includes it as one of the ten films that defined the decade of the '90s.⁴⁷ Perhaps more to the point, adults outside the film industry treat Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* as a paradigmatic romantic story. For instance, a poll of *Ladies' Home Journal* readers listed it as one of "The 10 Most Romantic Movies" of all time, along with *Gone with the Wind* and *Pretty Woman*.⁴⁸ Likewise, a Popcorn review claims that the little details and classic moves in the Disney film are what "make up the TRUE date movies of all time."⁴⁹ As Hearne remarks, "the sheer sophistication and international dominance of the Disney commercial machine guarantee that a Disney version of a fairy tale or classic will be THE authorized version for millions and millions of young viewers all over the world."⁵⁰

Critics' and Reviewers' Responses to Disney's Version

Disney's offering was rich enough to support multiple critical readings, dominant and resistant, positive and negative, though the positive ones far outnumber the negative ones. The primarily positive reactions feature four prominent themes. The first two themes are technical excellence and success at blending the classic and modern to maximize inter-generational appeal. Many admire the realistic animation and technical cinematic skill that earned the film Oscar nominations and a Golden Globe Award.⁵¹ Roger Ebert praised the film for "penetrat[ing] directly into my strongest childhood memories, in which animation looked more real than live action features."⁵² Others celebrate its proven ability to appeal across inter-generational audiences by blending the classic and the modern. Reviewer Chris Hicks terms it "a first-class winner all the way [that] should provide sufficient entertainment value for every age."⁵³ The *Washington Post's* Hal Hinson calls the film "more than a return to classic form, it's a delightfully satisfying modern fable, a near-masterpiece that draws on the sublime traditions of the past while remaining completely in sync with the sensibility of its time."⁵⁴ Even self-admitted anti-Disney critics are enthusiastic about this film's merit and inter-generational appeal. Mark R. Leeper opens his review by sharing his usual disdain for Disney films, but then raves, "*Beauty and the Beast* demonstrates that a lot more can be done in this medium. . . . Parents should go with their kids. If you don't have kids, go anyway."⁵⁵ Ten years later at the film's re-release, James Berardinelli observed:

Walt Disney's 1991 instant classic, *Beauty and the Beast*, is not only the finest animated movie ever made, but deserves a prominent position on any list of all-time

greats. . . . *Beauty and the Beast* attains a nearly-perfect mix of romance, music, invention, and animation. While many animated features claim to appeal equally to adults and children, *Beauty and the Beast* is one of the rare ones that actually achieves that lofty goal. It's a family feature that someone over the age of 18 can venture into without an accompanying child.⁵⁶

Two other prominent positive response themes celebrate Belle as updated gender model and embrace the film's undercurrent of irrepressible romantic hopefulness. Elaine Showalter calls *Beauty and the Beast* "the first feminist Disney film, a liberated love story for the '90s."⁵⁷ Harriett Hawkins lauds Belle as "a post-feminist heroine" who is "independent, adventure-seeking, unconventional, province-hating, and hunk-despising. And also a *bookworm*."⁵⁸ Belle is hailed as a relative improvement in gender representations and lessons over previous Disney heroines, classic and recent.⁵⁹ One critic even proclaims Belle "the first liberated cartoon creation."⁶⁰

For some, reading Belle as a progressive gender model went hand-in-hand with seeing the film's romantic hopefulness as a positive. The message that change is possible appealed to many. For instance, Susan Z. Swan's Jungian feminist reading of the film as a Gothic romance praises Disney's rhetorical choices that "appeal overtly to audiences looking for traditional romance while at the same time subverting the dominant ideology, caricaturing traditional roles, and transforming the model for accomplishing romance between women and men" into one of interdependence and equality.⁶¹ Sharon D. Downey's deft dialectical reading uses the "gender conflict juxtaposing male and female experiences" to resist Disney's overt privileging of the male and recast the preferred reading's romantic ideal.⁶² Her resistant reading extracts a more progressive model of relational fulfillment by interpreting the film as a story of male-female mutual empowerment and completion. Others reluctantly embrace the dominant reading as itself a positive message on gender and romance. *Sight and Sound's* Marina Warner confesses,

Liking a Disney film doesn't come easily. . . . But this version of *Beauty and the Beast* is funny, touching and lively, and communicates *romantic hopefulness* with panache and high spirits. It's a true inheritor of a long literary tradition of romance, sieved through the consciousness of 70s feminism, which asked for plucky fairy-tale heroines and got this: a Hollywood belle who prefers books to hunks [*italics added*].⁶³

Although recognizing that Disney splits "the male into the good beast and the bad beast," this critic seems untroubled by the romantic hope that "all he ['good' Beast] needed was the love of a good woman"—even while acknowledging that "such a huge helping of female autonomy, *responsibility*, self-determination, and *the powers of salvation* add up to a *mighty charge* for one small Belle to shoulder [*italics added*]."⁶⁴ Such comments imply that Disney satisfied those with suspicions about its gender representations and pleased them with its hopeful romantic arc.

Negative reactions to the film also share some consistent themes, most exhibited earlier in the section on Disney's changes to the legend. Besides earlier noted objections to the overall level of violence added to Disney's version and its radical narrative alterations changing an enduring, sophisticated moral tale into a conventional modern romance and chase story, two additional themes emerge. First,

many contend that the film is as “misogynist” as Disney’s other animated classics and Belle is not an updated gender model, but just the usual patriarchal fare splashed with a few “liberated” codes, such as love of reading and a professed desire for adventure. Kathi Maio notes that the studio went “out of its way to neutralize” criticisms about sexual politics that it suffered for *The Little Mermaid*, yet Disney’s “proof” that Belle is a model of female independence is “that she reads. . . . Her favorite book appears to be a romance about a prince and his sweetheart.”⁶⁵ And Belle’s quest for adventure is quickly overwhelmed by her need to nurture first her father, then the Beast, so that “those dreams take her only as far as the forbidding castle on the other side of the river, to a suitor even more terrifying than the loutish Gaston” where “Belle throws her freedom away in an act of feminine self-sacrifice that even Ariel would have thought twice about.”⁶⁶ Further evidence for this negative theme is the focus on Beast’s story with Belle marginalized as a plot device and object of desire. Elizabeth Dodson Gray argues,

While Beauty gets cobilling in the story title and movie, the whole focus is really upon the Beast. The central question is, “Will Beast be delivered from his enchantment? Will he be returned to his true identity?” . . . The old macho hero may be dead, but the Beast . . . is the clear mythopoetic representation of the man who is totally preoccupied with his own salvation, who is prone to violence, and who is still very much “under the spell” of an enchantment [i.e., the institutional patriarchal system].⁶⁷

And Belle’s “lesson” is not greater self-awareness, but about how to appreciate a partner in spite of his rages and selfishness and to coax beauty from his beastliness. Highlighting this “night-and-day” departure from the traditional legend’s more balanced story, Maio offers further proof in producer Don Hahn’s comment that “our version is the Beast’s story. It’s about a guy with a very serious problem;” Maio adds “namely, his brutal temper and total selfishness.”⁶⁸

A second theme in negative reactions objects to the film’s message that the “love of a good woman” can fix a flawed man and it is her duty to provide that nurturing until it succeeds. Gray notes, “The spell that is upon the Beast is broken ‘by the love of a good woman,’ and Beauty frees him finally to become his concealed wondrous self. . . . All this is a typical patriarchal tale about what is required of a good woman.”⁶⁹ Instead of reading this as healthy romantic hopefulness against the odds,⁷⁰ these respondents find it concerning. Maio observes,

Is [Beast] a romantic hero? He is, according to Disney, after Belle rehabilitates him through the magic of her femininity. Touched by the love of a good woman any devil will become a docile, devoted gentleman. . . . Would that it were so! But the millions of women battered by husbands and lovers each year can testify just how false—and dangerous—Disney’s little fantasy is.⁷¹

Gray, who acknowledges that this film can be read as “a nasty replay of patriarchal scripts exploiting women into endless self-denial and self-sacrifice” or as giving “to women—and *only* to women—the power to ‘break the enchantment’ of patriarchy,” rejects both positions to argue that men need to take responsibility for male violence toward women and for ending it.⁷²

My reading of the film shares themes from both camps (e.g., the film engages viewers with violence; it promotes and rewards romantic hopefulness against the odds, which is double-edged; it reinforces the notion that the love of a good woman changes a beast and she is responsible to provide that nurture) as well as Maio's and Gray's concerns about the real-life stakes if this idealized romantic hopefulness is not fulfilled in viewers' lives (i.e., "Does the Beast's psychological profile in the film remind you of a violence prone wife batterer?"⁷³). However, this epideictic dimension approach treats the film's violence and romance as rhetorically inseparable. Although individuals might find inspiration in Disney's film for a more progressive vision of what romance should become, the essay's next two sections make the case for its conservative, society-wide potential to excuse some violence's intersection with romance.

Inter-Generational Epideictic, Processed through Violence, and the Significance of Chip

Epideictic and Coaching Continuity in Inter-Generational Community Attitudes and Dispositions

By its ubiquity, repetitive themes, and positioning as "entertainment," popular culture can serve an epideictic function, though that is not its only function. Epideictic "has significance and importance . . . because it strengthens the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds."⁷⁴ Epideictic's power is not in calling for some immediate decision or response but in laying the groundwork for and intensity of a disposition to act one way over another in a range of unspecified future encounters.⁷⁵ According to Celeste Michelle Condit, epideictic serves three social functions: display/entertainment, shaping/sharing of community, and definition/understanding; the second term in each pair identifies a function for audiences, which is the more relevant consideration when interpreting popular culture texts.⁷⁶

The entertainment uses of Disney's film by audiences of all ages are unquestionable. American adults, who have their own experiential bases on which to draw, largely praised the film's depiction of romance and used it for family entertainment; for child viewers, with no parallel experiential bases by which to evaluate the film's depictions of romance, it might serve as an educational initiation into how what their adult caregivers treat as praiseworthy romance operates. Veronica Hefner and Barbara J. Wilson's recent study of romantic comedy films' influence on young people's beliefs about romance suggests why films might be even more powerful than more studied television genres (e.g., soap operas, reality-based shows):

Movies offer stories that trace relationships from the beginning to the end in one packaged narrative. In contrast to the romantic relationships on television, which often take several seasons to fully develop the characters, movies are viewed in a single sitting. These presumably potent messages could boost the impact on attentive viewers.⁷⁷

One immediately learns the consequences of characters' choices, including how they use and react to violence in romances. Although ideal romantic beliefs may be challenged by more "realistic" views also presented in romance films, such narratives' ultimate happy endings and the relative happy/unhappy fates of the characters who endorsed versus challenged romantic ideals (e.g., "love conquers all") ultimately reinforce idealized beliefs over realistic ones.⁷⁸

When the romance genre goes animated and inter-generational, the plot and relevant belief structure must be made even more pronounced via textual devices (e.g., violence, explicit exposition from appropriate characters and in songs) so that children can enjoy and understand. On-screen violence is the simplest device to both entertain and teach. Based on their classic studies of television violence in popular fare, George Gerbner and Larry Gross argue that mediated violence reminds community members of accepted power relationships. It "is the cheapest and quickest dramatic demonstration of who can and who cannot get away with what against whom. It is an exercise in norm-setting and social typing, . . . depicting violations and enforcement of the rules of society."⁷⁹ Intentionally or not, epideictic lessons are efficiently and dramatically taught through undisputed displays of violence in a community's popular texts.

Positioned in popular entertainment, violence often performs a socially conservative function by reiterating established power and positional relationships: "As action, violence hurts, kills, and scares. The last is its most important social function because that is what maintains power and compels acquiescence to power. Therefore, it is important who scares whom and who is 'trained' to be the victim."⁸⁰ To preserve a social order, both "violent" and "victim" (and, I would add, tolerant, non-intervening bystander) roles must be learned; violence is "a dramatic demonstration of power which communicates much about social norms and relationships, about goals and means, about winners and losers, about the risks of life, and about the price for transgressions of society's rules."⁸¹ Mediated violence thus teaches the uninitiated and reminds more experienced members whose privileges and position the community will likely back in real-life confrontations.⁸² The issue is not copy-cat violence, but reinforcing dominant power positions and acquiescing to their privileges. The film's explanation and resolution may normalize concrete signs of intimate partner violence for viewers in ways that make them unremarkable, even romantic. *Beauty and the Beast* is not alone in these representational practices. But it provokes special concern because it introduces an inter-generational audience to them and explicitly instructs viewers, via the cute character Chip, in an ideology on appropriate romance, the victim's role and ability to "manage" partner violence, and bystander duties.

Second, via epideictic's shaping/sharing function, a "community renews its conception of itself and of what is good by explaining what it has previously held to be good and by working through the relationships of those past values and beliefs to new situations. . . . Definitions of community are often advanced by contrast with 'others' outside [the values] of the community" (e.g., Gaston's unacceptable violence).⁸³ Significantly, the values shaped may be "undisputed though not formulated."⁸⁴ As argued next, violence in *Beauty and the Beast* codes heroes and villains and creates a hierarchy of social acceptability for violence. The results coach

viewers' sympathies for and acceptance of Beast and explain why Belle should stay and reform him.

Finally, with its understanding function, epideictic explains some confusing or "troubling issue in terms of the audience's key values and usual practices. Through the resultant understanding, the troubled event will be made less confusing and threatening, providing a sense of comfort for the audience."⁸⁵ Understanding symbolically tames the world by making it fit within existing beliefs and values. Via the subplot of Chip's education in love, the film addresses a troubling cultural ambiguity (i.e., socially acceptable intersections of love and violence) with rhetorical choices that can be read as explaining and quieting concerns about it.

As with education generally, the perspectives and action dispositions that epideictic coaches for audiences tend to conserve and justify present power relationships.⁸⁶ However, the nature of this conservative dynamic may differ according to the audience member. Aristotle, an early authority on the subject, suggests that epideictic operates via praise or blame to mark what a community considers honorable or disgraceful.⁸⁷ He goes on to claim that all people "individually and in common" aim at "happiness and its component parts" and so the various genres, each in its own way, facilitate that pursuit.⁸⁸ The puzzle, then, emerges from Book II, Chapter 14 in which Aristotle sharply distinguishes among the young, the old, and people in their prime and differentiates what tends to constitute "happiness" for each based on life experiences to date (e.g., for the young, the noble; for the old, the useful; for those in life's prime, the mean between noble and useful). Yet Aristotle makes no attempt to address how a particular text or genre or speaker *simultaneously* might address inter-generational audiences or variously serve epideictic's conservative function for those with generationally divergent experiences and views.

Instead Aristotle ignores the reality of inter-generational audiences even in his own time and simply recommends audience segmentation, with the caveat that only "like" can credibly address "like": "Wherefore, since all men are willing to listen to speeches which harmonize with their own character and to speakers who resemble them, it is easy to see what language we must employ so that both ourselves and our speeches may appear to be of such and such a character."⁸⁹ Contextually, "character" here means from the same age demographic. Given the importance of epideictic to stabilizing a community's values across generations and the observation that this function regularly occurs without audience segmentation, there is an unmet need to rhetorically analyze how epideictic's conservative dynamic—whether as a genre or a dimension of various kinds of texts—might operate differently across generations in a single text, at once teaching and reinforcing community values. This question is particularly pressing when the subject is romance, where adults have firsthand experience but children have only what they witness and how they are taught to interpret what they witness. In *Beauty and the Beast*, problematic adult relationships are made meaningful and less threatening for inter-generational audiences, educating immature community members and reassuring adults that troubled romantic partnerships have meaning and merit the hope inspired by traditional, idealized romantic beliefs.

Ultimately, this exercise is more than a reading of a single film. It demonstrates the heuristic potential of examining texts for their epideictic dimensions. An epideictic dimension need not be the dominant or preferred reading of the text—mine certainly will not be—nor is it one that emphasizes the possibilities for change that a text might also support; it is one that shows how a text coherently, elaborately, and powerfully promotes and justifies values, beliefs, and practices that maintain status quo power relationships, even when those are not its ostensible lessons. This criticism also demonstrates versatile rhetorical processes by which inter-generational offerings might epideictically address troubling community issues and make complicated social lessons understandable and appealing to the uninitiated as well as to the experienced, who may have found that life has not lived up to the promises for happiness that abiding by the proffered social arrangement promised. Finally, it makes concrete and recognizable, in a single text designed for an inter-generational community, rhetorical processes that account for the “cultivation” effect documented by Gerbner and his colleagues. While cultivation analysis focuses on exposure to total patterns offered by television “to define the world and legitimize the social order” rather than on individual genres or programs, textual analysis of this representative anecdote of inter-generational lessons in romance (taught and supported through violence) might illustrate at a micro-level how “cultivation of shared conceptions of reality among otherwise diverse publics”⁹⁰ occurs.

Though far from the only text exhibiting acceptance of some romantic violence, *Beauty and the Beast*’s epideictic lessons might be especially potent because of the trusted source, adults’ approval of children enjoying the film’s many pleasures, and textual choices that make the film explicitly instructive on proper romance. This combination is reason to suspect that the film is consistent with the community’s bedrock of unformulated, though undisputed values about romantic violence. A Catholic priest who teaches the children of his parish precepts of Catholicism is an epideictic educator, reckon Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, though the same rhetor giving the same lesson to adults of another religious affiliation changes him into a propagandist. The key difference is that “the educator has been commissioned by a community to be the spokesman for the values it recognizes, and as such, enjoys the prestige attaching to his office.”⁹¹ Disney largely enjoys such a role in US society. Parents and babysitters trust Disney to align with and promote undisputed, if unformulated, social values and impart them to children through entertainment.⁹² Over time, Disney’s child viewership has gotten progressively younger and viewing venues more intimate; families approvingly watch *Beauty and the Beast* together, and two-year-olds “swarm with their caretakers to the theater, or sit propped before their electronic babysitters”⁹³ watching a DVD.

While children might absorb the lessons from whatever entertainment caregivers provide, Disney films in general and *Beauty and the Beast* in particular are ones that adults choose for *family* as well as personal entertainment. The young, as Aristotle characterized them, “know” only by virtue of social conventions and are ashamed if they violate them because as yet they have developed no other compass.⁹⁴ As Gerbner and Gross argue, fictional stories presented for entertainment via visual media “need

not present credible accounts of what things *are* to perform the more critical function of demonstrating how things really *work*.⁹⁵ for the uninitiated as well as longtime community members. Chip, the teacup, is this epideictic dimension reading's central framing figure, both because he is the film's only child and so may be the character with whom immature viewers might most readily identify and because his witness and questions to adults on how to interpret what he sees provide a main conduit for expressing the film's ideology on romance. He is the character who needs/wants love explained to him, who witnesses Beast's violence and attends to adults' discussions of a troubled romance, and who supplies, at key moments, the hopeful interpretations to be learned.

The Pleasures and Epideictic Potential of Violence in Beauty and the Beast

Disney's plot and character departures from the legend's history, and the violence that they introduce and depend on as rhetorical strategies, can bring pleasure to an inter-generational audience. As justified by the studio, the addition of violence and slapstick action (from Beast repeatedly terrifying his servants to Gaston beating up his friends and neighbors for fun as well as to signal social dominance), sometimes to rousing music (e.g., "No one fights like Gaston, no one bites like Gaston, . . . no one hits like Gaston"), appeals to viewers who might otherwise be bored with the traditional plot moved primarily through conversation.⁹⁶ These choices simplify a legend usually rich with more varied epideictic lessons and moral quests for both main characters into primarily a modern romantic plot with a love triangle. That simplification, clarified through violence, makes the story easy to follow and familiar for children, while also authorizing it for adults in the tradition of great romances where the suitor must fight to win the girl. In the world of this text, violent rhetorical choices offer viewers pleasure in at least three ways.

First, the rhetorical uses and variations on violence establish an evaluative hierarchy of actions and male characters; not all violence is equal. Gaston's gratuitous and excessive violence toward his friends and neighbors, efforts to forcibly institutionalize Maurice, and attempts to kill Beast (particularly his sneak attack after Beast mercifully spares his life) are opportunities for audiences to jeer Gaston and recognize him as the villain. In spite of his good looks and the swooning trio of beauties who fawn for his attention, Gaston's violent disrespect toward Belle personally and what she values (e.g., her books, her father) reinforces the film's rhetorical coding of him as the villain and an undesirable suitor for Belle (if not for the trio of village beauties, a question that the film's choices leaves unresolved). "Honorable" Disney-concocted uses of violence that develop the romantic plot and code Beast as the hero and superior love interest include his savage fight with the wolves to save Belle after she fled from him in terror and his violence in self-defense against Gaston and the murderous mob. Between these extremes is a range of violent acts open to greater interpretation, such as Beast terrorizing Belle's father and the castle staff and his behavior toward Belle as he "courts" her.

Second, the film's violent coding of the key male characters rhetorically coaches viewers' sympathies *for* Beast and *against* Gaston. Although both potential mates physically threaten and imprison Belle, try to cut her off permanently from her family, have ulterior motives for wooing her (i.e., breaking the spell, preserving status in the community), and never apologize to Belle, the film's choices cultivate viewers' negative reactions toward Gaston and their positive ones, perhaps by default, toward Beast in this romantic contest with Belle as the prize. By dramatic comparison, Gaston's unrepentant violence, which includes pinning Belle against a wall and destroying her valued possessions, makes Beast's symbolic violence toward her less noticeable and disturbing even for savvy adult critics. For instance, Showalter's favorable film review calls Gaston "the real beast, a sadistic, self-loving bully."⁹⁷ Another complimentary reviewer relatively favors Beast by calling Gaston "supremely macho and . . . to be macho is to be beastlike" and Beast "super-macho, but [who] knows it is a curse both literally and figuratively."⁹⁸ A third labels them "the bad beast and the good beast."⁹⁹ Gaston is "the true beast, Calvinist and unredeemed, socially deviant in his supremacist assumptions."¹⁰⁰ Narratively what differentiates Beast is that he is redeemable from, if unapologetic for, his violence, but the film suggests that this redemption is *Belle's* project, not his sole responsibility. This portrayal, of course, perpetuates the stereotype that a "good" woman can/should change a "bad" boy. With Disney's extreme caricature of a handsome but relatively more violent romantic competitor against whom to direct viewers' disapproval (i.e., a more obvious representation of a dangerous companion), Beast seems more sympathetic, misguided, and "amenable to instruction."¹⁰¹

Third, Belle's responses to her suitors' violence may help the film please by negotiating an acceptable position in sexual politics for many adult viewers, which may compensate for or deflect attention from Beast's partner violence. Disney uses both rhetorical and marketing choices to code Belle as someone who can take care of herself, minimizing viewers' need to worry about or sympathize with her when Beast acts violently. Disney rhetorically fashions Belle as the kind of person we want to be and want our children to become: smart, with a voracious appetite for books, learning, and adventure; strong enough to be non-conformist in spite of her neighbors' criticisms; pretty, but not vain and not herself attracted to someone based merely on looks or popularity (i.e., Gaston); loyal to her family, however ditzy and inept; self-reflexive enough to know that she wants to escape "this provincial life"; initially dismissive of being limited to the role of wife. Belle pluckily rejects the advances of her handsome, yet more, and more gratuitously, violent suitor Gaston. Based on these textual choices, Belle, like many actual victims of intimate partner violence, does not seem like the kind of individual who would get involved or stay with a potentially violent partner, so there seems no need to worry about her.

In these ways and in the absence of the non-violent magnetic elements that enabled earlier legend versions, violence helps diverse viewers "make sense" of the film's plot, characters, and sexual politics, shapes their sympathies, and gives knowledge and pleasure. The productive network of power enacted through this film's violence pleases on multiple levels and may please different generations differently, even as it educates

all. Young viewers may enjoy it as action that engages them and clarifies who and what is good or bad. Older viewers might appreciate both Beast's and Gaston's violence toward Maurice as devices that efficiently propel the plot and mark for whom to root. The violence pleases as it paradoxically explains and reaffirms both romantic ideals *and* violent status quo relationship patterns that fall short of those ideals. Examining this film's coherent, yet little discussed, epideictic dimension on the socially meaningful intersection of violence and romance demonstrates how a text not ostensibly presented as socially conservative or educational fare on that topic might serve those purposes.

Normalizing and Romanticizing Practices and Patterns of Intimate Partner Violence

The prevalence of violence's intersection with intimacy in so many US adults' romantic involvements gives moral significance to reading this epideictic dimension of a film authorized by its place in the traditions of great romances, classic legends, and family entertainment. The CDC's comprehensive¹⁰² *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report* categorizes psychological aggression (short of physical blows) toward an intimate partner as *expressive aggression* (e.g., acting angry in a way that seems dangerous) or *coercive control* (e.g., isolation from family and friends; keeping track of partner's whereabouts) and indicates that experiencing frightening aggression from a partner is fairly common. Based on telephone interviews with more than 16,500 adults, nearly half of US women (48.4 percent) report experiencing at least one form of psychological aggression in an intimate relationship, with approximately 40 percent experiencing expressive aggression and 41 percent reporting coercive control; one in three women had been slapped, pushed, or shoved, while one in four had suffered more severe physical violence.¹⁰³ Almost half of men surveyed (48.8 percent) had experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner, with 31.9 percent reporting expressive aggression and 42.5 percent experiencing coercive control.¹⁰⁴ Romantic violence, including psychological aggression short of blows, seems widespread and commonplace in this country.

Yet, concrete acts of intimate partner violence have somehow been rendered invisible to well-intentioned Americans, perhaps by the idealized messages of "romantic hopefulness" that popular culture provides. For example, a 2006 survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation and RF Insights concludes that a radical public "information" or "knowledge" gap about the *patterns* or *practices* of partner abuse prevents many well-meaning Americans from recognizing and acting when they witness violent signs or acts in others' romances.¹⁰⁵ Stacy Morrison, editor in chief of *Redbook*, which co-sponsored the survey, observes,

The survey confirms that Americans continue to fail to recognize both the blatant [two in five did not mention hitting, slapping, or punching] and subtle [90 percent failed to define *repeated* emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse or controlling behaviors] signs of domestic abuse. Domestic violence ranges from pushing and shoving to demeaning talk and isolation from family and friends. . . . I want people to know what it looks like and not be afraid to step in and help someone who needs it.¹⁰⁶

What explains such counter-intuitive results? Certainly reluctance to get involved and doubts about whether an incident is isolated or part of a larger pattern explain some inaction. But inability to identify or see partner violence as unacceptable—which are prior to and necessary, but not sufficient, for intervention—might also be epideictically cultivated by normalizing and romanticizing its patterns and signs in a community’s celebrated inter-generational texts.

Disney’s family film is infused with typical signs, practices, and patterns of romantic violence played out between a sympathetic violent and a self-sufficient victim who couple quickly and young.¹⁰⁷ It introduces immature viewers to an ideological microcosm (or cultivation theme) of popular culture’s conservative interpretation of romantic violence and shapes/shares community norms for coping with it. Disney’s rhetorical choices make concrete acts of romantic violence both realistic and familiar, yet position them as not causes for concern or sympathy for the victim or as a reason to end a relationship; instead, it signals an opportunity for the lover to reform the violent with the result that the efforts end in happily-ever-after love.

Making Familiar and Romanticizing Practices of Expressive Aggression and Coercive Control

Disney’s film shows Beast repeatedly engaging in *expressive aggression* and *coercive control* toward Belle, yet codes him, with the community’s endorsement, as a great romantic hero. Via these choices, the film might negotiate for an inter-generational audience the potentially troubling issue of the frequency and possible progression of expressive aggression and coercive control in some romantic relationships (one’s own or those of others), without endorsing any social changes. It makes romantic violence meaningful, individually fixable, and less troubling. All seems to turn out well when bystanders ignore the Gestalt of a pattern of abuse and facilitate the romance so that the couple can work through the issue themselves—with special emphasis on the victim’s responsibility to foster the violent partner’s change. Critically reading this epideictic dimension shows how the film might soothe and reassure adults that their troubled relationships (or ones they witness) are not exceptional, should be endured with hope, and can be turned blissful via proper victim effort; it shows how immature community members might be introduced to this ideology and coached in responses that make partner violence an unremarkable and “private” part of romantic life.

The violence that Beast enacts toward Belle in Disney’s film bristles with the primary *expressive aggression* and *coercive control* behaviors characterizing real-life relationships with repeated intimate partner violence: (a) controlling behavior; quick to anger; wants to know the partner’s whereabouts at all times; angry if the partner is late; (b) quick involvement in the relationship; “I’ve never felt loved like this by anyone!” (c) isolation; the abuser may cut the partner off from friends, family, and resources; (d) blaming others for the violent partner’s feelings or angry actions; (e) breaking or striking objects when angry, which may prefigure personal violence; (f) overt threats of violence.¹⁰⁸ In a display of coercive control common with intimate

partner abusers, the first moves Beast makes are to exact Belle's promise never to leave him, to imprison her at home, and to separate her from her family. Belle's father Maurice begs Beast "please spare my daughter" to which Beast responds: "She's no longer your concern." As Beast sends Maurice unceremoniously and permanently on his way, Belle sobs: "You didn't even let me say good bye. I'll never see him again. I didn't get to say good-bye." In the same scene, Beast makes his love interest swear that she will never leave him, no matter what—and the situational context in which the promise is extracted (i.e., an exchange of Maurice's life for hers) suggests that there will be severe consequences for Belle, and possibly also her father, if she breaks that vow. "BEAST: . . . you must promise to stay here forever. BELLE: You have my word." Victims in abusive romantic relationships often report that the abuser systematically cuts them off from communication with and the support of the family and friends who most care about their well-being and might threaten harm to those people to keep the victim compliant.

Beast broadens his coercive control by restricting Belle's food intake when he finds she is not only late but refusing to come to dinner as he ordered. (Earlier. "LUMIERE: [whispering in his ear] Dinner—invite her to dinner. BEAST: [Growing angry] You . . . will join me for dinner. That's not a request!"). Later, "BEAST: What's taking so long? I told her to come down. Why isn't she here yet?!" When Beast learns that Belle is not coming, he bellows and charges upstairs to bang on her bedroom door, while the pleading objects trail, trying desperately to calm him.

BEAST: (Yelling) I thought I told you to come down to dinner!

BELLE: (From behind the door) I'm not hungry.

BEAST: You'll come out or I'll . . . I'll break down the door!

LUMIERE: (interrupting) Master, I could be wrong, but that may not be the best way to win the girl's affections.

COGSWORTH: (pleading) Please! Attempt to be a gentleman.

BEAST: (growing angrier) But she is being so . . . difficult!

MRS. POTTS: Gently, gently.

BEAST: (very dejected) Will you come down to dinner?

BELLE: No!

(BEAST looks at the OBJECTS, very frustrated.)

COGSWORTH: Suave. Genteel.

BEAST: (Trying to act formal, bowing at the door) It would give me great pleasure if you would join me for dinner.

COGSWORTH: Ahem, ahem, we say "please."

BEAST: (once again dejected) . . . please.

BELLE: (Mad at BEAST) No, thank you.

BEAST: (furious) You can't stay in there forever!

BELLE: (provokingly) Yes I can!

BEAST: Fine! Then go ahead and STARVE!!!! (To OBJECTS) If she doesn't eat with me, then she doesn't eat at all!

Beast retreats, slamming a door so hard that a piece of ceiling plaster falls on quivering Lumiere.

In this scene, not only does Beast physically threaten, control, and attempt to deprive his love interest of food, enlisting the help of others to do so, but also he blames his outburst on Belle “being so difficult.” Then the Beast self-righteously retreats to his lair to spy on her, “knocking over and destroying things in his path. BEAST: I ask nicely, but she refuses. What a . . . what does she want me to do—beg? (Picking up the MAGIC MIRROR) Show me the girl.” As the story and the coercive control progress, Beast spies on Belle without her knowledge using his magic mirror, listens in on her private conversations, and requires his surrogates to monitor her whereabouts at all times—or pay the price they know can be exacted by his violent temper. For example, when Belle leaves her room and goes down to the kitchen where some of the enchanted objects insist on feeding her, against Beast’s orders, clock/butler Cogsworth comments: “Well keep it down. If the master finds out about this, it will be our necks!” The film includes other instances of Beast blaming Belle for either his angry feelings or his violent actions, such as in the scene when they talk about the blow-up that motivated Belle to run away, which Disney treated as a key encounter in filming and which is analyzed in the next subsection.

Disney Makes Familiar, Safe, and Romantic a Cycle of Violence that Keeps Victims Hopeful

Beyond familiarizing viewers with a plethora of classic behaviors of expressive aggression and coercive control in romances, Disney’s rhetorical choices can be read as portraying those acts consistent with the observed pattern of Walker’s Cycle Theory of Violence. Based on interviews with victims of repeated intimate partner violence, educational psychologist Lenore Walker explains why victims in violent relationships stay. Over time, this theory “has become the most enduring explanation for why battered women stay in abusive relationships.”¹⁰⁹ Her decades of research suggest that a predictable three-part battering cycle is common, though not inevitable. Beast’s multiple demonstrations of violence toward Belle and the responses to it by both Belle and the bystanders can be read as fitting and facilitating this recognized cycle. Disney’s choice to allude, via Chip’s final question and Mrs. Potts’s answer, that this romance turns out happily credentials an epideictic lesson that witnessing or experiencing signs or episodes of the cycle is not cause for concern. My claim is not that lesser violent acts or threats inevitably lead to violence or to more serious violence (they do not) or that copy-cat violence is the main worry or that Beast inevitably will threaten Belle with increasing severity during their marriage. We do not and cannot know the latter, and Chip’s closing comment as he watches the wedding dance pointedly asks his mother for reassurance that the pair will live happily, which she gives. Rather it is that the film, including this reassurance that romantic ideals triumph, may familiarize viewers with and encourage them to overlook, excuse, or romanticize not only isolated acts but *patterns* of intimate partner violence that often bode ill in real-life relationships and may cultivate expectations that a happy ending will emerge, if the victim loves enough.

In what follows, the application of Cycle Theory of Violence's phases to the film is not a "textbook case" but mimics its general progression in ways that render familiar and simultaneously romanticize a similar, if not exact, pattern of blame and violent actions toward an intimate partner. In phase one, tension gradually builds, with the aggressor expressing dissatisfaction and hostility and the victim placating the partner. The victim may succeed temporarily, "which reinforces her [or his] unrealistic belief that she [or he] can control"¹¹⁰ the partner's anger. Eventually, in phase two, the aggressor's angry response pattern breaks through the victim's efforts to please, and an acute battering incident (psychological or physical) occurs. For example, in an act of coercive control, Beast restricts his love interest's freedom of movement. He not only makes her promise to stay inside the castle, but declares part of that space off-limits to her. Tensions and Beast's temper build as Belle questions his proclamation.

BEAST: The castle is your home now, so you can go anywhere you wish, except the West Wing.

BELLE: (looking intrigued) What's in the West Wing?

BEAST: (stopping angrily) It's forbidden!

At first Belle complies. But when she investigates the West Wing, the film's most carefully orchestrated scene has Beast lashing out in a realistic fury that escalates to expressive aggression.

BEAST: (growing angry) Why did you come here?

BELLE: (Backing away, scared) I'm sorry.

BEAST: I warned you never to come here!

BELLE: I didn't mean any harm.

BEAST: (Angrier) Do you realize what you could have done? (Begins to thrash at the furniture)

BELLE: (Pleading, but still scared) Please, stop! No!

BEAST: (Screaming) Get out!!!! GET OUT!!!!

In his uncontrolled rage, Beast throws and breaks inanimate objects around Belle as she cringes, her back against an armoire. The instant she moves aside Beast destroys the wardrobe against which she had been cowering with a ferocious backhanded blow. He does not touch Belle, but, in a classic warning sign of abuse that approaches phase two in its severity, emotionally terrorizes her with symbolic violence so physically near that the only remaining step in escalation is bodily contact. Belle flees, and Beast goes after her, saving her from the wolf pack and setting up the film's move to phase three.

In the Cycle Theory of Violence's third "loving-contrition" phase, the aggressor

may apologize profusely, try to assist his victim, show kindness and remorse and shower her with gifts and/or promises. The batterer himself may believe at this point that he will never allow himself to be violent again. The woman wants to believe the batterer and, early in the relationship at least, may renew her hope in his ability to change. The third phase provides the positive reinforcement for remaining in the relationship.¹¹¹

Victims who stay convince themselves that the partner they see in the “loving-contrition” phase is the “real” person and that, if the behavior of phases one and two is fixed, they will be left with the good “essence” of the person with whom they fell in love.¹¹² However, in real life, if the partners (however worldly and educated) stay together and the violent does not admit a problem and seek help outside the relationship, research shows that “tension-building” behavior may become more frequent, while “loving-contrition” behavior declines.¹¹³ Violence may not only repeat but escalate over time.¹¹⁴ In adult-targeted entertainment, violent cues foreshadowing perhaps the most romanticized marital rape in cinematic history by Rhett Butler in MGM’s *Gone with the Wind* fit this pattern—including the man kicking in a door to prove to the strong woman that nothing could keep him out of her bedroom. The film romanticizes his violence further by showing a blissfully satisfied Scarlett in bed the morning after her husband’s attack. She acts confused by Rhett’s apology and dismayed at his promise never to do it again, seriously blurring the line between violence and passion and suggesting violence’s romantic appeal to this victim.

When Belle despairs and flees from the castle after the fierce confrontation in Beast’s lair, she encounters a pack of menacing wolves, a Disney addition. “Loving-contrite” Beast, who has come after Belle, fights them off and is injured in the process. This event might be easily read through Walker’s observations that the violent’s outburst is followed by “loving-contrition,” including trying to assist his victim—but might quickly circle back to expressive aggression and blaming the victim for the problems. Belle brings Beast back to the castle and is nursing his wounds when this scene occurs, with Chip and the other enchanted objects watching:

Fade to int of den, with BELLE pouring hot water out of MRS. POTTS. She soaks a rag in the water, then turns to BEAST, who is licking his wounds.)

BELLE: Here now. Oh, don’t do that. (BEAST growls at her as she tries to clean the wound with her rag.) Just . . . hold still.

(She touches the rag to the wound and BEAST roars in pain. The OBJECTS, who have been watching, jump back into hiding from the outburst.)

BEAST: That hurts!

BELLE: (In counterpoint) If you’d hold still, it wouldn’t hurt as much.

BEAST: Well if you hadn’t run away, this wouldn’t have happened!

BELLE: Well if you hadn’t frightened me, I wouldn’t have run away!

BEAST: (Opens his mouth to respond, but has to stop and think of a good line)

Well you shouldn’t have been in the West Wing!

BELLE: Well you should learn to control your temper!

Finally, consistent with a violent in the “loving-contrition” phase, Beast tries to patch up his troubled romance by offering extravagant gifts. As Beast discusses with his servants how to best impress Belle, the manipulative side of promises and gift-giving as a means to an end in romantic relationships might be taught to Chip and young viewers through word and example.

COGSWORTH: Well, there’s the usual things—flowers, chocolates, promises you don’t intend to keep. . .

LUMIERE: Ahh, no no. It has to be something very special. Something that sparks her inter—wait a minute.

Given Belle's love of reading, Lumiere suggests Beast give her the library, and she is delighted. The enchanted objects watch Belle's reaction and discuss, in Chip's presence, how well the gift seems to be serving the end of keeping her in a romantic relationship with Beast. Though they will not answer Chip's direct questions about how such gift-giving "works," the tone of the discussion clearly indicates the mature bystanders' approval of romantic manipulation.

Consistent with the repeat victim role that Walker describes, Belle convinces herself that when Beast is on his "loving-contrition" phase behavior she is seeing the "real" him. For instance, as the couple feeds the birds and Belle teaches Beast to treat them gently, the film's heroine blames herself for not focusing exclusively on Beast's good side and implies that this, not his outbursts, is his "truer" self. Belle's minor teaching successes (e.g., table etiquette) helps convince her that she can and should reform Beast into a gentle, well-mannered partner, singing:

There's something sweet
And almost kind
But he was mean
And he was coarse and unrefined.
But now he's dear
And so unsure,
I wonder why I didn't see it there before.
New, and a bit alarming
Who'd have ever thought that this could be?
True, that he's no Prince Charming
But there's something in him that I simply didn't see.

While this legend is ostensibly about looking past appearances to find a more genuine interior—the most double-edged of messages when Beast turns back into a handsome prince¹¹⁵—Disney's version may also teach viewers to look beyond or distrust warning signs of romantic violence.

Just as Disney's choices may quiet viewers' concerns, Belle models quieting her own doubts. Viewers witness how Belle's own childish education on love (e.g., reading popular culture romances) has normalized her expectation that princes come in disguise and their true characters are only revealed over time. In an early scene, Belle describes the book that she finds most captivating to a flock of sheep:

Oh! Isn't this amazing!
It's my favorite part because, you'll see!
Here's where she meets Prince Charming
But she won't discover that it's him 'til chapter three!

Like other intimates who stay with violent partners, fueled by the hope that they can successfully change them, Belle takes on the project of "transforming" or "restoring" Beast in hopes that she can make him regularly his true self from the "loving-contrition" phase. However, this is not a project that Belle willingly adopts at first,

even though, from the moment she arrives, the bystanders press her to undertake it and break the spell that makes this Beast beastly.

Despite evidence that real-life romantic relationships characterized by repeated expressive aggression and coercive control rarely turn loving, safe, and happy, absent outside help, and Walker's research showing that escalating violence may threaten victims who stay in such relationships, this film minimizes these concerns for inter-generational audiences. We do not know whether violence returns to this couple's romance after the wedding, but we are encouraged to believe it does not—that the cycle is broken because of their love. When Belle and Beast marry, Chip asks his mother: "Are they gonna live happily ever after, mama?" "Of course, my dear. Of course," she assures him. This soothing resolution may function to excuse the foregoing violence without strong social challenge, reinforcing the acceptable existence of violence in blossoming relationships and making it an "individual" matter to be solved by love. Given the story line, the didactic message might be read as suggesting through enactment that couples who start in violent romantic relationships but stay together live happily ever after without others' intervention. While Disney certainly is not claiming this is true in every case, its arguably atypical, but reassuring take on troubled romance might discourage vigilance and devalue seeking or giving help. It may reinforce belief in myths that have been shown to keep victims' trapped in violent relationships and feeling responsible for them (e.g., "love is blind, love conquers all, love entails both pain and ecstasy, and love is passionate"); Mrs. Potts's explicit reassurance that the troubled courtship viewers have witnessed ends happily might epideictically endorse "the notion that love can solve any problem (including violence), and that the negative aspects of courtship will remit once marriage takes place."¹¹⁶ As the research stresses, such real-life romantic hopefulness is too often misplaced.

Enabling, Normalizing, and Romanticizing Intimate Partner Violence: The Castle Bystanders

As disturbing as Belle and Beast modeling the intricacies of classic roles, practices, and patterns of intimate partner violence in family entertainment is, I find the reactions and choices of the adult characters witnessing the danger signs in the presence of young Chip even more distressing. The adults' behavior and comments repeatedly might convey lessons to Chip, and so to viewers, on how to and why one should accept, enable, and romanticize a relationship that exhibits repeated signs of intimate partner violence rather than intervene or discourage it. Initially, it is important to clarify that the entire castle staff, including Chip, his behavior suggests, is well aware of Beast's temper and his capacity for violence prior to when the film's plot ensues. For instance, when Belle's father first wanders into the castle and the enchanted objects welcome him, they all pull away in fear when Beast enters. Two other examples, mentioned earlier (i.e., "it will be our necks" and the objects diving for cover when Beast roars as Belle nurses him), demonstrate the staff's acute awareness of Beast's violent tendencies. When counseling Beast on how to win over Belle, Mrs. Potts and Lumiere remind him in unison, "You must control your

temper!” In spite of their knowledge, the staff prods Belle into a romantic relationship by both cultivating her blind hope in a happy ending and encouraging her to ignore her own perceptions of risk and safety instincts. They coax her to instead stay and “get along” by complying with Beast’s demands. When Belle mourns being imprisoned with “I’ve lost my father, my dreams, everything,” Mrs. Potts urges her to stay and hope for a happy ending, although she gives no good reason to do so: “Cheer up, child. It’ll turn out all right in the end. You’ll see.” When Belle tries to avoid Beast’s temper by staying in her room, Wardrobe, fearing Beast’s reaction if Belle does not appear for dinner, insists. “BELLE: That’s very kind of you, but I’m not going to dinner. WARDROBE: Oh, but you must!”

After Beast’s explosion over Belle’s dinner absence and as he spies on her with his magic mirror, Wardrobe soothingly minimizes the Beast’s violent behavior to a sobbing Belle, whose instincts are telling her to protect herself. Wardrobe diminishes her experience and encourages Belle to overlook the outburst, to give Beast another chance to show his “true” self.

WARDROBE: (in mirror pleading) Why the master’s not so bad once you get to know him. Why don’t you give him a chance?

BELLE: (still disturbed by the attack) I don’t want to get to know him.

I don’t want to have anything to do with him!

Again, after the even more bodily threatening outburst in Beast’s lair and as Belle grabs her cloak and rushes for freedom, castle bystanders encourage her to repress the urge to flee:

LUMIERE: Wh- Where are you going?

BELLE: Promise or no promise, I can’t stay here another minute!

COGSWORTH: Oh no, wait, please wait!

All four adult bystanders model responses—for Chip and inter-generational viewers who might witness signs of violence in real-life romances—that minimize and enable that relationship’s continuation and the possible reoccurrence of violence. They may epideictically cultivate the importance of urging a victim to stay put, to overlook or personally fix a partner’s violence, and to offer the violent ever more chances—hoping love will eventually halt the violence.

A final dysfunctional lesson that these bystanders might teach or reinforce for inter-generational audiences is that the victim is “really” in control of the violent’s explosions, a perspective that Jones claims animates the many scientific studies of intimate partner violence that focus primarily on *victims’* characteristics.¹¹⁷ For example, Cogsworth blames Belle for Beast’s outburst outside her bedroom when she declines his dinner “invitation.” He says, without contradiction, to Mrs. Potts: “Well, if you ask me, she was just being stubborn. After all, the master did say ‘please.’” Cogsworth’s statement affirms Beast’s prerogative to command and coerce Belle, ignores Beast’s yelling and the threats that both preceded and followed this nicety, and overlooks the fact that someone else had to prompt Beast to even utter that “please.” Instead, this undisputed comment suggests to viewers that Belle, who was

barricaded in her room, was in control of the situation because her absence triggered Beast's tantrum. Thus, his subsequent devolution into violence might be read as her fault. She is responsible to avoid triggering the violent's phase two outbursts and to reform them, if she finds them unacceptable. In pursuit of an inter-generational market and greater profits, Disney introduced rhetorical devices that might familiarize viewers with, desensitize them to, or coach tolerance of warning signs, practices, and patterns of intimate partner violence. The ending may reassure viewers that all eventually turns out well in a truly romantic relationship, if the participants are committed. While the film's violence, woven in sophisticated ways through these rhetorical choices, offers pleasure to different generations for different reasons, all paths offer pleasure from the violence and might lead to the conclusion that acts of romantic violence are not causes for concern or intervention but explicable, even "natural," parts of a very passionate, blossoming romance.

It is worth noting that the romantic "violent"- "victim" (and bystander) roles that Disney's film might model and justify are not limited by gender or sexuality. Given the paucity of positive romantic relationship models in popular culture for LGBTQ couples (especially in family-targeted entertainment), these early models may also be powerful in defining and explaining "passionate love" in the less publicly charted territory of same-sex relationships. Although far less comprehensively and reliably studied than heterosexual relationships, available research suggests that intimate partner violence occurs among LGBTQ romantic partners at least as often as among heterosexual couples.¹¹⁸ The effects of community-approved epideictic suggesting intimate partner violence enacts romantic love and passion and is the path to happily-ever-after might be especially destructive for populations in which victims already receive less support from the criminal justice and social service systems than do heterosexual victims.¹¹⁹ While popular culture presenting images of romanticized violence as normal and acceptable is not the only factor in LGBTQ abuse any more than it is in heterosexual partner violence, the additional complications of LGBTQ relationships underscore the moral importance of providing a better variety of community-approved, inter-generational entertainment representing mutually respectful, non-violent romances.

Conclusion

This essay suggests an answer to the puzzle left by Aristotle on how a single text can successfully address an inter-generational audience. Epideictic texts and dimensions of texts especially need to engage and educate inter-generational audiences in order to justify and maintain through time a community's practices, norms, expectations, and power relations. Inter-generational audiences struggle with the mysterious nature and norms of romantic courtship generally, and, given statistics showing how widespread yet invisible US romantic violence is, with the common, but seemingly contradictory intersection of romance and psychological or physical aggression. Murphy explains how epideictic can craft a shared world and expectations for diverse adult audiences regarding troubling issues by providing "the backdrop of values and

beliefs, heroes and villains, triumphs and tragedies against which and through which deliberative and forensic judgments are made in a ceaseless swirl of discourse.”¹²⁰ This effect need not come from traditional eloquence, but can arise from offering “a clear and compelling vision of the world.”¹²¹ In this animated film, heroes, villains, and plot are simplified, and the lessons are clarified and underscored through violence, coded community-valued virtues (e.g., Belle’s), the relative ends that different characters meet, and supplemental explanations from adult to child characters on how to interpret the action. Even children can grasp such a compelling vision of the world and what the text’s affirming community sees as acceptable or admirable, can be primed to interpret, judge, and behave similarly in future encounters, and are encouraged to have faith in the community-approved recommendations. Shows of violence that reinforce prevalent values and beliefs, witnessed by a child character who is instructed in interpreting them by trusted adults, can effectively substitute for “like” rhetors addressing “like” audiences.

In addition to demonstrating how violence as a rhetorical device effectively but unobtrusively teaches as it pleases inter-generational audiences, this essay introduces and illustrates the value of the theoretical concept “epideictic dimension.” Epideictic dimensions cut across genres as well as texts that fit no recognized genre. They are constituted by textual layers that teach and maintain a community’s “common” beliefs and values to guide members’ behavior beyond the immediate situation so that status quo practices and power distributions are justified and continue to operate smoothly. The notions of dominant and resistant readings do not completely cover or explain operations of this textual dimension. My reading of how *Beauty and the Beast*’s rhetorical choices collectively, yet subtly, might coach inter-generational audiences to accept and romanticize intimate partner violence is not the dominant or a preferred reading, but it is also not a resistant reading because it shows how the status quo’s troubles are explained and its usual practices, patterns, and power relationships made resistant to sweeping change. Identifying the internally consistent rhetorical patterns that subtly but consistently assume, communicate, and potentially reinforce socially conservative beliefs and values, especially when that is not a text’s expressed purpose, is valuable because it brings critical questions of epideictic analysis to bear on an important textual dimension that crosses deliberative, forensic, and epideictic texts ostensibly aimed at cultivating different values (e.g., “real beauty” may not be visible on the outside), as well as texts that do not fit any genre.

Dominant and resistant readings are simultaneously possible, of course, and can co-exist and collaborate with analysis of a text’s many epideictic dimensions. Dominant and resistant readings frequently focus on the large power relationships related to race, gender, and class; reactions to Disney’s film focused largely on these aspects. However, every community’s operation relies on many other beliefs and values, some equally dark, being reinforced and accepted as justified, even taken for granted. Epideictic dimension analysis focuses on how a text might cultivate such reactions, both questionable and praiseworthy. For instance, this particular reading used Chip as the framing device to show how Disney’s film communicates and repeats complex lessons on the appropriate intersection of romance and violence, making it easy for even young viewers to absorb.

But one could use this same approach to look for the epideictic lessons (positive and negative) foregrounded if one focuses on, say, Gaston as a framing device. In that reading, one might unexpectedly find Gaston's role *indispensable* to unequivocally teaching the text's ostensible moral that "beauty and virtue do not necessarily go together." After all, Belle exudes beauty and virtue throughout the story. And Beast, once he performs virtue by becoming lovable to Belle, is rewarded with the return of his princely good looks. Only Gaston, with his excessive violence and good looks (and possibly the vapid trio of village beauties who covet him), remains to drive home for young viewers the central lesson on appearance's unstable link to virtue. Thus, analyzing a text's epideictic dimensions may yield stabilizing social messages that do not call attention to themselves otherwise, as well as yet-unrecognized rhetorical means by which a text advances its explicit epideictic purposes.

Another important difference between analyzing a text's epideictic dimensions and practices of resistant readings is that the former is much easier. It takes relatively less critical work for epideictic lessons to make sense and appeal to non-specialized viewers because they jibe with the familiar status quo. Different readings of a text require different amounts of effort and knowledge brought to the reading and yield varying amounts of pleasure; resistant readings are more work and usually yield less pleasure than dominant ones.¹²² My reading requires scant effort to see or absorb, compared to resistant readings of the film; one need not know the categories from Walker's theory or the CDC or have any specialized rhetorical training to absorb this film's conventional lessons on romantic violence. The text matter-of-factly presents evidence that is dramatic, repetitive, internally coherent, and so overwhelming that, with Chip's help, even a child viewer can grasp the film's undisputed, if unformulated, beliefs about what to consider "good" or "acceptable" in romantic violence. This reading requires no resistant spirit or intellectual sophistication or new behaviors by community members because it aligns readily with soothing, conservative messages consistent with the authorizing community's current approach to romance mixed with psychological and physical violence. It explains the film's appeal and epideictic potential with respect to romance for viewers of *all* ages and sophistication. It is a "downhill" reading whose very ease is what makes its potential impact, if left unrecognized and unaddressed, so concerning.

Consequently, this reading illustrates how a community-approved popular culture text whose value is authorized by celebrating its multiple traditions (i.e., classic legends, great romances, family entertainment, cinematic achievement) might function as an inherent barrier to progressive social change. I have argued for greater attention to the stock issue of inherency on practical social concerns (in this case, intimate partner violence).¹²³ Inherency is not about placing blame or finding who caused a shared problem; instead it seeks to identify what perpetuates a recognizable shared problem in spite of attempts to address it or why previous solutions have failed. Only once one recognizes how the existing system, intentionally or unintentionally and directly or indirectly, facilitate the problem by its very nature can effective solutions be advanced.¹²⁴ Disney is not the only community narrator circulating conservative lessons on romanticizing partner violence, but it does tailor

these messages to massive inter-generational audiences including children hungry to learn appropriate conventions. For instance, one way in which this text might subtly cultivate resistance to broad social change is by making ambiguous and potentially acceptable some romantic violence. Gaston's violence toward Belle is coded as odious, but Beast's is treated as explicable frustration that is manageable with Belle's help.

The proven strength of this particular attitudinal barrier suggests the importance of not cultivating it for inter-generational audiences initially—or at least of not letting its cultivation go unremarked upon—rather than just later trying to “cure” it in adults. Changing attitudes toward the acceptability of romantic violence, especially those fostered from childhood on, is most difficult. Research on “batterer intervention programs” demonstrates that even abusers who complete intensive re-education programs and diminish their own violent practices toward romantic partners do not change their attitudes about violence.¹²⁵ Until potential barriers to change—such as attitudes and unequal power relationships authorized and romanticized by a community's celebrated inter-generational epideictic popular texts—are critically exposed and openly discussed, structural solutions (e.g., laws, required arrests on domestic violence calls, victim shelters) are unlikely to ameliorate widespread intimate partner violence.

Notes

- [1] All film quotations are from <http://www.fpx.de/fp/Disney/Scripts/BeautyAndTheBeast.txt>.
- [2] Consistent with inter-generational marketing, both Angela Lansbury and Celine Dion sang the title song in the 1991 version. For the film's 2010 Blu-ray release, *American Idol* champion Jordin Sparks recorded a new version and shot a princess-themed music video, extending the appeal to new young audiences. Tanner Stransky, “Jordin Sparks Does *Beauty and the Beast*,” *Entertainment Weekly*, June 4, 2010, http://www.ew.com/ew/gallery/0,,20385926_20386375_20790029,00.html.
- [3] Sally Gearheart, “The Womanization of Rhetoric,” *Women's Studies International Quarterly* 2 (1979): 195–201; Sonja K. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin, “Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric,” *Communication Monographs* 62 (1995): 2–18.
- [4] Wayne Brockriede, “Arguers as Lovers,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 5 (1972): 1–11; Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., “Toward an Ethics of Rhetoric,” *Communication* 6 (1981): 305–14; Maurice Natanson, “The Claims of Immediacy,” in *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, ed. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1965), 10–19.
- [5] Wayne C. Booth, “The Rhetorical Stance,” in *Contemporary Rhetoric: A Reader's Coursebook*, ed. Douglas Ehninger (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1972), 218–24. (Original work published 1963).
- [6] Michele C. Black, Kathleen C. Basile, Matthew J. Breiding, Sharon G. Smith, Mikel L. Walters, Melissa T. Merrick, Jieru Chen, and Mark R. Stevens, *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report* (Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).
- [7] “Despite Its Prevalence, the Patterns of Domestic Violence Are Not Understood by Many Bystanders,” *PRNewswire*, September 21, 2006. Available at Michigan Poverty Law Program <http://www.mplp.org/Resources/mplpresource.2006-12-21.0455588147/family3.htm>.
- [8] Lenore E. Walker, *The Battered Woman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979); Lenore E. A. Walker, *The Battered Woman Syndrome*, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer, 2000).

- [9] Betsy Hearne, *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions of an Old Tale* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 1.
- [10] Hearne, *Beauty and the Beast*, 124.
- [11] Allison Craven, "Beauty and the Belles: Discourses of Feminism and Femininity in Disneyland," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 9 (2002): 126, 132.
- [12] June Cummins, "Romancing the Plot: The Real Beast of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 20 (1995): 23.
- [13] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 24.
- [14] Hearne, *Beauty and the Beast*, 140.
- [15] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 25.
- [16] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 127.
- [17] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 130.
- [18] Chris Hicks, "Beauty and the Beast," Review, *Deseret News*, November 22, 1991, para. 7, <http://www.desnews.com/movies/view/1,1257,154,00.html>.
- [19] Rick Marin, "Sexy Enough for Adults, Magical for Kids," *TV Guide*, November 16–22, 1991, 15.
- [20] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 22, 26.
- [21] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 25; Betsy Hearne, "Disney Revisited, or, Jiminy Cricket, It's Musty Down Here!" *Horn Book Magazine* 73 (1997): para. 15, <http://people.lis.illinois.edu/~ehearne/disney.html>.
- [22] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 22, 25.
- [23] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 26; Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 138.
- [24] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 26–27.
- [25] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 125.
- [26] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 132.
- [27] Bob Thomas, *Disney's Art of Animation: From Mickey Mouse to Beauty and the Beast* (New York: Hyperion, 1991), 147.
- [28] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 132–33.
- [29] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 135.
- [30] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 26.
- [31] Susan Jeffords, "The Curse of Masculinity: Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*," in *From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender, and Culture*, ed. Elizabeth Bell, Lynda Haas, and Laura Sells (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 166–67.
- [32] Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 135.
- [33] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 27.
- [34] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 27.
- [35] Hearne, "Disney Revisited," para. 20, 16.
- [36] Both Disney's producer and its script-writer purposely discarded earlier fairy tale, film, and television versions to "make our own," Thomas, *Disney's Art*, 140, 143.
- [37] Janet Maslin, "Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* Updated in Form and Content," *New York Times*, November 13, 1991.
- [38] David Ansen, "Just the Way Walt Made 'em: Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast' Is an Instant Classic," Review, *Newsweek*, November 18, 1991, 74–75, 80; Thomas, *Disney's Art*, 124–203, esp. 115, 183, 193, 198. The confrontation during the pivotal lair scene was vocally recorded ten times, with a co-director urging voice actors to ever-greater emotional heights, Thomas, *Disney's Art*, 128.
- [39] Ansen, "Just the Way," 80.
- [40] Thomas, *Disney's Art*, 70–71, 129.
- [41] Thomas, *Disney's Art*, 144.
- [42] Katrina Ames, "A Little Saint-Saens, A Lot of Fun," *Newsweek*, November 18, 1991, 74–75; Ansen, "Just the Way," Craven, "Beauty and the Belles," 125.

- [43] Marin, "Sexy Enough," 14–15.
- [44] Kathi Maio, "Mr. Right Is a Beast: Disney's Dangerous Fantasy," *Visions Magazine* 7 (Summer 1992): 44.
- [45] Marina Warner, "Beauty & the Beasts," *Sight and Sound*, 2, no. 6 (October 1992): 11.
- [46] Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 23.
- [47] *AFI's Greatest Romance Movies – A Kiss Isn't Just a Kiss*, n.d., <http://movies.about.com/library/weekly/aaafitoplista.htm>; "10 Movies That Defined Our Decade," *Premiere*, October 1997, 63–80.
- [48] "The 10 Most Romantic Movies," *Ladies' Home Journal*, February 2002, 44.
- [49] "Popcorn: Beauty and the Beast," Review, n.d., para. 6, <http://members.tripod.com/~Reviews/Beauty.htm>.
- [50] Hearne, "Disney Revisited," para. 7.
- [51] James Berardinelli, Review, 2001, para. 6, [Movie-reviews.colossuss.net/movies/b/beauty.html](http://movie-reviews.colossuss.net/movies/b/beauty.html); Roger Ebert, "Beauty and the Beast," Review, *Chicago Sun-Times*, November 22, 1991; Ansen, "Just the Way," 80.
- [52] Ebert, "Beauty and the Beast."
- [53] Hicks, "Beauty and the Beast," para. 9.
- [54] Hal Hinson, "Beauty and the Beast," Review, *Washington Post*, November 22, 1991.
- [55] Mark R. Leeper, "Beauty and the Beast (1991)," Review, 1991, para. 1, 9, <http://www.imdb.com/reviews/11/1182.html>.
- [56] Berardinelli, Review, para. 1, 11.
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- [58] Harriett Hawkins, "Maidens and Monsters in Modern Popular Culture: *The Silence of the Lambs* and *Beauty and the Beast*," *Textual Practice* 7 (1993): 263.
- [59] See, for example, Dawn Elizabeth England, Lara Descartes, and Melissa A. Collier-Meek, "Gender Role Portrayal and the Disney Princesses," *Sex Roles* 64 (2011): 555–67; Cynthia Erb, "Another World or the World of an Other? The Space of Romance in Recent Versions of *Beauty and the Beast*," *Cinema Journal* 34, no. 4 (1995): 50–70.
- [60] Unnamed critic quoted in Maio, "Mr. Right," 44.
- [61] Susan Z. Swan, "Gothic Drama in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*: Subverting Traditional Romance by Transcending the Animal-Human Paradox," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16 (1999): 351.
- [62] Sharon D. Downey, "Feminine Empowerment in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*," *Women's Studies in Communication* 19 (1996): 192, 207.
- [63] Warner, "Beauty & the Beasts," 11.
- [64] Warner, "Beauty & the Beasts," 11.
- [65] Maio, "Mr. Right," 44–45. See also Cummins, "Romancing the Plot," 25.
- [66] Maio, "Mr. Right," 45.
- [67] Elizabeth Dodson Gray, "Beauty and the Beast: A Parable for Our Time," in *Women Respond to the Men's Movement: A Feminist Collection*, ed. Kay Leigh Hagan (San Francisco: Pandora, 1992), 160. Jeffords claims that older versions all feature Belle's story, "The Curse of Masculinity," 167.
- [68] Maio, "Mr. Right," 45.
- [69] Gray, "Beauty and the Beast," 160. See also Jeffords, "The Curse of Masculinity," 171.
- [70] See, for example, Warner, "Beauty & the Beasts," 11.
- [71] Maio, "Mr. Right," 45.
- [72] Gray, "Beauty and the Beast," 163, 165–67.
- [73] Gray, "Beauty and the Beast," 159.

- [74] Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 50.
- [75] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 52–53.
- [76] Celeste Michelle Condit, “The Functions of Epideictic: The Boston Massacre Orations as Exemplar,” *Communication Quarterly* 33 (1985): 288.
- [77] Veronica Hefner and Barbara J. Wilson, “From Love at First Sight to Soul Mate: The Influence of Romantic Ideals in Popular Films on Young People’s Beliefs about Relationships,” *Communication Monographs* 80 (2013): 152.
- [78] Hefner and Wilson, “From Love at First Sight,” 160–62.
- [79] George Gerbner and Larry Gross, “The Violent Face of Television and Its Lessons,” in *Children and the Faces of Television: Teaching, Violence, Selling*, ed. Edward L. Palmer and Aimee Dorr (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 152.
- [80] Gerbner and Gross, “Violent Face,” 160.
- [81] Gerbner and Gross, “Violent Face,” 156.
- [82] Gerbner and Gross, “Violent Face,” 155.
- [83] Condit, “Functions,” 289.
- [84] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 53.
- [85] Condit, “Functions,” 288.
- [86] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 54.
- [87] Aristotle, “*Art*” of *Rhetoric*, trans. John Henry Freese (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), I.iii.1–6.
- [88] Aristotle, “*Art*” of *Rhetoric*, I.v.1–2.
- [89] Aristotle, “*Art*” of *Rhetoric*, II.xiii.16.
- [90] George Gerbner, “Cultivation Analysis: An Overview,” *Mass Communication & Society* 3/4 (1998): 178.
- [91] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 52.
- [92] See Downey, “Feminine Empowerment,” 187.
- [93] Hearne, “Disney Revisited,” para. 18.
- [94] Aristotle, “*Art*” of *Rhetoric*, II.xiv.10–11, note b.
- [95] Gerbner and Gross, “Violent Face,” 151.
- [96] Ansen, “Just the Way,” 74–75; Marin, “Sexy Enough,” 15; Thomas, *Disney’s Art*, 149.
- [97] Showalter, “*Beauty and the Beast*,” 66.
- [98] Leeper, “*Beauty and the Beast*,” para. 3.
- [99] Warner, “Beauty & the Beasts,” 11.
- [100] Warner, “Beauty & the Beasts,” 11.
- [101] Warner, “Beauty & the Beasts,” 11.
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- [104] Black et al., *National Intimate Partner*, 45–47.
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- [106] Quoted in “Despite its Prevalence,” para. 12.
- [107] Thomas, *Disney’s Art*, 161, 182.
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- [109] Linda G. Mills, *Violent Partners: A Breakthrough Plan for Ending the Cycle of Abuse* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 28.
- [110] Walker, *Battered Woman Syndrome*, 126.

- [111] Walker, *Battered Woman Syndrome*, 127.
- [112] Walker, *Battered Woman Syndrome*, 136.
- [113] Walker, *Battered Woman Syndrome*, 128, 132. See also Leslie Morgan Steiner, *Crazy Love: A Memoir* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009), 236–42.
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- [116] Sally A. Lloyd, "The Darkside of Courtship: Violence and Sexual Exploitation," *Family Relations* 40 (1991): 16.
- [117] Ann Jones, *Next Time, She'll Be Dead: Battering & How to Stop It* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 139.
- [118] Claire M. Renzetti, "Violence and Abuse among Same-Sex Couples," in *Violence Between Intimate Partners: Patterns, Causes and Effects*, ed. Albert P. Cardarelli (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), esp. 70–77; Christopher W. Blackwell, "Domestic Violence in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons: Populations at Risk," in *The War Against Domestic Violence*, ed. Lee E. Ross (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 130–31. Given society's heterosexist biases, LGBTQ partner abusers have additional weapons, such as threatening to "out" the victim, Renzetti, "Violence and Abuse," 74.
- [119] Renzetti, "Violence and Abuse," 88–89; Blackwell, "Domestic Violence," 133–36; Mills, *Violent Partners*, 36.
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